

論文

Classroom Teaching Language Revisited:
Use of “Lexical Bundles”

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要 旨

『教室英語』を学ぶための音声教材（聴解訓練用教材）は、実際の『教室英語』をどれほど忠実に再現しているのだろうか。現実の『教室英語』との間にずれはないのであろうか。この問いに答えるため、ひとつの中級者向け教材と、ミシガン大学のMICASEというデータベースに置かれている実際の『教室英語』をコーパスとして利用し、Biber et al. (2004) による語句、語法の研究の分析手法と機能的分類を用いて、その差異を考察する。使用頻度を用いたこの分析手法を用いて検討すると、特に「心的態度」を表す表現においての差異がはなはだしいことがわかる。つまり、実際には多用される「心的態度」を表す表現が、教材ではほとんど使われていない。これは、教室英語が教材で描写されている以上に、話し手である教師と聞き手である学習者とのコミュニケーションとしての側面を強く示していることを表すと共に、聴解訓練用教材の『教室英語』が、実は、書き言葉を単に朗読しただけにすぎないものである事を示唆している。また、『教室英語』では、談話の展開を示す標識も多用されるが、逆に教材では、過度に使用されていることもわかった。特にこの2点を踏まえ、『教室英語』学習用音声教材のあり方を再検討する。

キーワード: Academic lecture

講義

classroom teaching language

教室英語

English for specific purposes

特殊目的のための英語

English for academic purposes	教育目的のための英語
stance expressions	心的態度を表す表現
corpus	コーパス
MICASE	ミシガン大学コーパス
textbook material	教材
chunk	語句のまとまり
discourse marker	談話標識

Introduction

This paper examines the use of “lexical bundles” in textbook lecture materials. Lexical bundles are “word forms that often co-occur in longer sequences” (Biber et al., 1999, p.989). They are not idiomatic or structurally complete, but the sequences are “building blocks” (Biber et al., 1999, p.991) in discourse and are so common and recurrent that language learners and teachers should pay much attention to them. On the other hand, they are too ordinary for language researchers to take notice of. They are mostly left unobserved and to be investigated. In this paper previous research on phraseology of authentic academic lectures is first examined. Although researchers seem to agree that overt discourse signals are useful listening cues which guide students in the classroom teaching discourse, their definitions of the term vary and they talk about different things from different points of view. Corpus-based analysis of “textbook” classroom teaching speech is meaningful in studying whether the three types of lexical bundles in real academic talks, i.e. “stance expressions,” “discourse organizers” and “referential expressions,”¹ (Biber et al., 2004) are also found in textbook materials and show the same distributions. Or to be more specific, it is important to know whether those building blocks are accurately represented in teaching materials as in the real classroom language. Otherwise, textbooks would not show the nature of classroom teaching from the following three points of view: Use of lexical items, structural patterns in use, and steps and moves of discourse in this particular register. Frequency measure is used to uncover the actual language use in the register. It is examined whether or not the teaching materials as models of authentic classroom language reflect the real nature of the classroom teaching.

Previous Research on Academic Lectures

Lecture comprehension is difficult and challenging to both L1 and L2 listeners. Rost (2002) writes, “For example, understanding a three-minute segment of an academic lecture is considered to be more challenging than understanding a three-minute story” (pp.128-129). Olsen and Huckin (1990) also say that L2 students are not successful in getting the contents of the lecture even though they know all the words in it.

One of the language resources that listeners can rely on is the use of discourse markers. They are used to show the organization and relationships of the moves and steps the speaker takes in the talking. Chaudron and Richards (1986) propose the distinction between macro-markers and micro-markers. “Today I’m going to talk about” is an example of the former while *so*, *well*, *okay* and *now* belong to the latter. The researchers show that the macro-markers help learners get the gist of the teaching content while micro-markers are not of much help. However, Flowerdew and Tauroza (1995) say that they also play an important role in comprehension.

Swales and Malczewski (2001) give a different concept, *new discourse flags* and use different categorization although they also conduct a corpus-based analysis. Their approach is distinct from the one taken here in that they pay more attention to such single words as *okay*, *so*, *now* and *let*. The first three are categorized as micro-markers and the last one, *let*, is analyzed part of macro-markers in Chaudron and Richards (1986). By using the term, *new discourse flags*, Swales and Malczewski (2001) don’t refer to the sequences of words but single word occurrences and they depend on perceptual salience to choose the specific, conspicuous markers in the discourse. Here it is important to make it clear again that the lexical bundles which are examined and explored in Biber et al. (2004) are not perceptually salient at all. Rather, they are too common to be noticed. Another feature of Swales and Malczewski (2001) is that their work is for description, not for explanation of the described and depicted facts.

Our Corpora

Two different sets of data are examined. One small corpus is the collection of transcriptions of 12 different lecture materials for listening comprehension. All are from “Contemporary Topics 1,” which is for pre-intermediate learners of English as an

L2. The topics vary from science to humanity lectures (Appendix 1). The other corpus is the accumulation of 12 different classroom lecture transcripts chosen from MICASE (Appendix 2) at random. The database at MICASE has not only lectures but also discussions, workshops, dissertation defenses and others but they are excluded from the present corpus. It is clear that there are some inevitable limitations on this research. First, these two corpora are different in size because each one of the materials in the textbook is intentionally short and about five to six minutes long, and the authentic university lectures in MICASE are mostly about 60–110 minutes long. Second, the two corpora are too small to observe regularities in the kinds and distributions of longer lexical bundles although this is what we need to know to look into the real nature of everyday academic talks. Third, the topics of the lectures in the two corpora are not correlated. We could have chosen the same 12 topics as the textbook materials from MICASE, but such efforts might not be meaningful since we may have to take into account some other factors such as the characteristics of the language the speakers use, the size of the audience and more in order to obtain an overall, general picture of what academic lectures are like.

Hypotheses

As we have seen above, researchers agree that overt discourse markers are helpful cues for understanding the content of the lectures. Textbook lectures will contain as many markers as the actual academic talks do (Hypothesis 1). They will also include the same types of “stance” and “referential” expressions which were found to be common among classroom teaching in Biber et al. (2004) (Hypothesis 2). If the textbook materials really reflect actual use of these expressions, there will be some variety, but not as much as in the real spoken academic discourse because textbooks must show some usual patterns for the learners and there should be some simplification or modification in textbooks. (Hypothesis 3)

Procedure

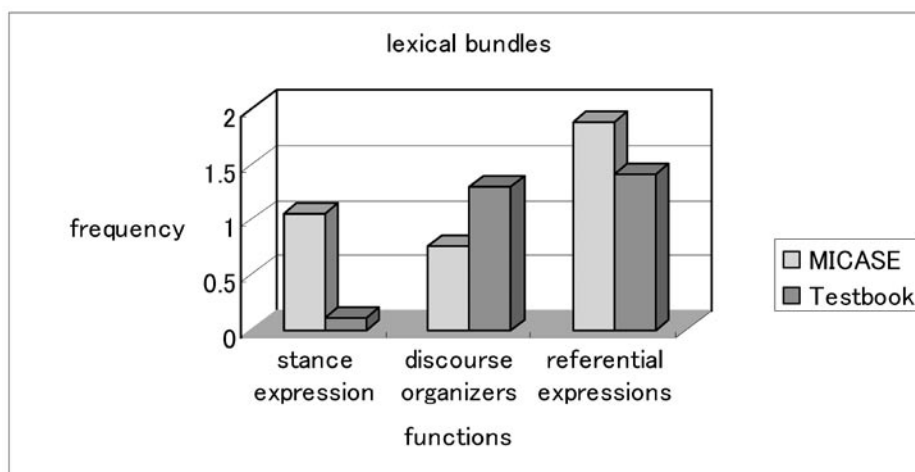
We use the list of “lexical bundles,” which are put into three different functional categories in Biber et al. (2004). We also observe “new discourse flags” in Swales and

Malczewski (2001). We compare the two corpora in terms of frequency of each expression referred to in these two sources.

Findings

	MICASE/144366		Textbook/9270	
	word count	x/1000	word count	x/1000
stance expression	152	1.053	1	0.108
discourse organizers	109	0.755	12	1.294
referential expressions	272	1.884	13	1.402

Table 1



Graph 1

The most striking difference is observed in occurrence of “stance expressions.” “Stance expressions” are the ones the speaker makes use of in order to refer to personal attitudes or views of both the speakers and the hearers and also those which indicate modality and epistemic stances (See Appendix 3 for details). Table 1 and Graph 1 show that those stance bundles are ten times less frequent in the textbook than in MICASE transcripts. In actual classroom teaching, they are so abundant and have a variety (Also shown in Appendix 3), but there is only one count in textbook materials, i.e. “if you want to.” It is likely that teachers show their stance much more frequently and take into account the views and perspectives on the part of the audience. In other words, the

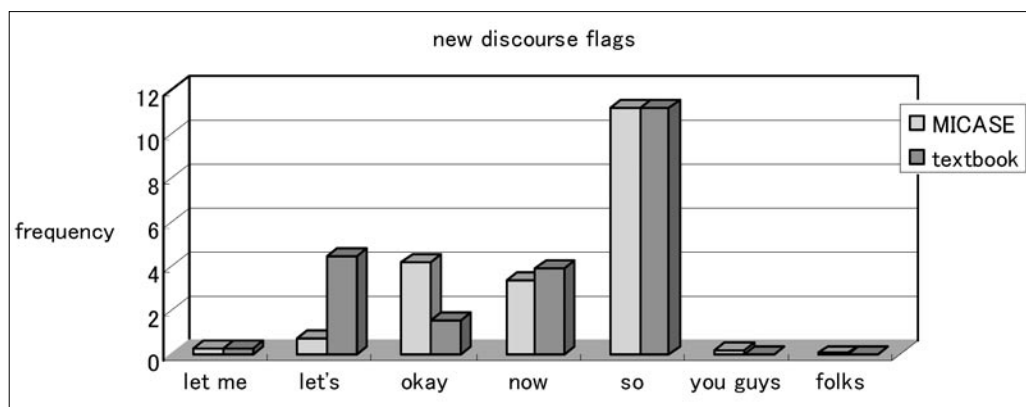
stance expressions are underrepresented in teaching materials. To put it differently, in authentic classroom teachers try to talk to their students and effectively communicate with them while teaching. They also make efforts to be sincere to the students. This is seen in the use of modality expressions. It is safe to say that real classroom teaching is not just information-giving but also community-building. Simply put, in classroom we learn together.

Another important difference appears in the frequency of “discourse organizers.” Much research has been previously done on them and they are salient in discourse. It seems that they are easy to find not just for listeners but for researchers. They show up almost twice as much in textbook lectures. They are overrepresented in learning materials because of the attention by the researchers. However, the instances aside, the expression “on the other hand” counts six times out of twelve, which is quite unusual. There might be a bias in the use of this single expression. Is it more appropriate to use some other expressions with the same functions in some cases? There should be some modification or simplification in teaching materials, but at the same time learners must be exposed to other expressions with similar functions because this is what learning is about.

“Referential expressions” are found slightly less in textbook lectures. We can see that one of the reasons is that textbook materials are a lot shorter than the actual teaching. Referential function of all the expressions is less necessary in shorter discourse.

	MICASE/144366		Textbook/9270	
	word count	x/1000	word count	x/1000
let me	39	0.27	2	0.215
let's	103	0.713	41	4.423
okay/OK	606	4.198	14	1.51
now	489	3.387	36	3.883
so	1623	11.242	104	11.219
You guys	20	0.139	0	0
folks	3	0.02	0	0

Table 2



Graph 2

Table 2 and Graph 2 show the occurrence of new discourse flags. Although instances of *let's* and *okay* are reversed and we cannot explain the phenomena, others, i.e. *let me*, *now* and *so* show almost the same distributions. *So* is used in many different ways, and some have specific discourse function but not all. We have to count all the occurrences of the expressions in this study.

Conclusion

As we have seen above, stance expressions are common in classroom teaching and they are not appropriately represented in learning materials. They are actually underused in the textbook. We can say that teachers are more personally involved in communication with students. Actually, less-skillful students often confess and/or complain that listening comprehension materials of academic lectures are very difficult. We assumed that academic content and organization of lectures are the source of the difficulty. However, this small research shows the possibility that the fewer use of stance expressions might be one of the reasons they find textbook lectures hard to follow and understand. It is possible that textbook materials regrettably tend to be just the presentation of the organized idea or ideas. In other words, textbook lectures for listening comprehension are more like academic prose, which use less stance expressions than classroom teaching.

On the other hand, discourse signals or markers are somewhat overused in the textbook probably because of the attention researchers have paid so far. Though

textbook writers may try to offer materials that learners will find accessible, overuse of discourse signals may do more harm than good.

We also noted that the prevalent research practice that focuses just on the smaller sets of perceptually salient linguistic items or features and that depends on intuition of experts is not enough to find and explain actual patterns in natural language use.

Limitations of the Present Research and for Further Studies

There are grave limitations in this research. The limitations will be sure to lead us to the further possible inquiry. First of all, the textbook corpus is too small. “Contemporary Topics” is a series of lecture materials and has three levels. The other two levels of materials and other textbook lectures should be explored in the same manner.

Second, I didn’t refer to the subsets of lexical bundles. The functions of these longer fixed expressions should be investigated more properly by careful examination of the subcategories, the frequency and the usages both taken into account.

Third, here the functional categories of lexical bundles are used without reviewing: The validity and theoretical base of those functions and groupings are not inspected at all. If this line of examination of actual usages of those expressions is to be pursued, the legitimacy should be argued.

Fourth, it is necessary to learn more about simplification and modification in learning materials, both in general and of listening comprehension materials in particular. Learning materials must be accessible to learners, but at the same time they have to reflect actual use of the language. For example, proponents of extensive reading often mention that graded readers should be well written: Just to be simple is not right. Can we apply the same criteria to listening? What do we mean when we say that textbook lectures are simplified *and* good for the teaching purposes? We have to define what the meaningful simplification for language learners should and could be like. We could also think about whether the modification for reading is the same as that for listening because listening is less safe for beginning learners because of the real time nature and may induce more anxiety.

Given the outcomes and the shortcomings of the present study, more research should be done to examine the nature of classroom teaching and the equivalent teaching materials. Corpus-based approach will be one of the most promising ways to

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perform further study on ordinary, less conspicuous fixed expressions to learn about patterns and chunks in language use, both in particular registers and in general in human languages.

Note

- 1 We do not look into the fourth group, “special conversational functions” here.

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Appendix 1

Lectures from MICASE

Title of the Lecture	word count
Nobel Laureate Physics Lecture	14835
Statistics in Social Sciences Lecture	16438
Women's Studies Guest Lecture	10107
Intro Anthropology Lecture	11549
Race and Human Evolution Lecture	11211
Literature and Social Change Lecture	10069
Principles in Sociology Lecture	12219
Intro to Groundwater Hydrology Lecture	14008
Labor Economics Lecture	12391
Historical Linguistics Lecture	12935
Graduate Cellular Biotechnology Lecture	13324
Graduate Population Ecology Lecture	5280
	144366

Appendix 2

Lectures from“ Contemporary Topics 1”

Title	Word Count
Happiness	680
New Kinds of Food	790
Public Art	754
Journey to Antarctica	729
Violence on Television	770
Too Told to Learn?	807
Are We Alone?	691
Do the Right Thing	830
Good Night's Sleep	991
Negotiating for Success	628
Risking It	760
The Electronic Brain	840
	9270

Appendix 3

Subcategories among Lexical Bundles

I. STANCE EXPRESSIONS		
A. Epistemic stance	MICASE	Textbook
Personal:		
I don't know if	11	
I don't know what	6	
I don't know how	8	
I don't know I	5	
and I don't know	5	
I think it was		
and I think that	2	
you know what I		
I don't think so	1	
I thought it was	1	
well I don't know		
I don't know whether	1	
I don't know why	3	
oh I don't know		
Impersonal:		
are more likely to	2	
the fact that the	3	
	48	
B. Attitudinal/Modality stance		
B1) desire		
Personal:		
if you want to	9	1
I don't want to	6	
do you want to		
you want to go	1	
do you want a		
what do you want		
B2) obligation/directive		
Personal:		
I want you to	7	
you don't have to	12	
you don't want to		
you have to be	6	
you have to do	5	
you look at the	4	
you might want to		

you need to know	1	
and you have to	4	
going to have to	4	
you want me to	1	
do you want me	1	
Impersonal:		
it is important to		
it is necessary to		
B3) Intention/prediction		
Personal:		
I'm not going to	6	
we're going to do	1	
we're going to have		
and we're going to	1	
I was going to	1	
what we're going to	1	
are we going to	2	
are you going to		
Impersonal:		
it's going to be	1	
is going to be	6	
are going to be	1	
going to be a	1	
going to be the		
not going to be	1	
going to have a		
B4) ability		
Personal:		
to be able to	16	
to come up with	4	
Impersonal:		
can be used to		
it is possible to	1	
	104	
Total I.	152	1
II. DISCOURSE ORGANIZERS		
A. Topic introduction/focus		
what do you think	7	
if you look at	9	1
take a look at	2	
if you have a	14	3
if we look at	2	

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going to talk about	2	
to look at the	4	1
to go ahead and		
I want to do	6	
what I want to	2	
want to do is	3	
want to talk about	1	
you know if you	6	
a little bit about	12	
I would like to	2	
in this chapter we		
I/I'll tell you what	1	1
have a look at		
let's have a look		
do you know what		
	73	6
B. Topic elaboration/clarification		
has to do with	4	
to do with the	3	
I mean you know	5	
you know I mean	4	
nothing to do with	5	
on the other hand	10	6
as well as the	2	
know what I mean	3	
was going to say		
what do you mean		
	36	6
Total II.	109	12
III. REFERENTIAL EXPRESSIONS		
A. Identification/focus		
that's one of the	8	
and this is a	7	
and this is the	7	
is one of the	9	1
was one of the	5	
one of the things	16	
and one of the	9	
one of the most	3	3
those of you who	9	
of the things that	14	
	87	4

B. Imprecision		
or something like that	7	
and stuff like that	4	
and things like that	1	
	12	
C. Specification of attributes		
C1) Quantity specification		
there's a lot of	6	1
have a lot of	6	1
and a lot of	9	1
a lot of people	7	1
a lot of the	2	
how many of you	5	2
in a lot of	2	
the rest of the	8	
a little bit of	13	
a little bit more	12	
a lot of times	4	
than or equal to		
greater than or equal		
per cent of the		
C2) Tangible framing attributes		
the size of the		1
in the form of		
C3) Intangible framing attributes		
the nature of the	2	
in the case of	5	
in terms of the	13	
as a result of	6	
on the basis of	6	
in the absence of		
the way in which	3	
the extent to which	1	
in the presence of	3	
	113	7
D. Time/place/text reference		
D1) Place reference		
the united states and	3	
in the united states	11	2
of the united states		
D2) Time reference		
at the same time	9	

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at the time of		
D3) Text deixis		
shown in figure N		
as shown in figure		
D4) Multi-functional reference		
the end of the	16	
the beginning of the		
the top of the	3	
at the end of	15	
in the middle of	3	
	60	2
Total III.	272	13
IV. SPECIAL CONVERSATIONAL FUNCTIONS		
A. Politeness		
thank you very much	7	
B. Simple inquiry		
what are you doing		
C. Reporting		
I said to him/her		
Total IV.	7	